

BALLET TODAY



JUNE 1953

have no
yourite role"

ys
ARGOT
ONTEYN



vetlana
erisova

YRIL
EAUMONT



Ballet in Mexico



NEWS



REVIEWS



H.R.H. the Princess Margaret, President of the Sadlers Wells Foundation.

Mr. FREDERICK GARDINER

General Agent for the *EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION of MUSIC FESTIVALS*

REPRESENTING

PABLO CASALS FESTIVAL, PRADES

AIX EN PROVENCE

BERLIN

BESANCON

BORDEAUX

FLORENCE

HELSINKI

HOLLAND

WAGNER FESTIVAL, BAYREUTH

LUCERNE

MUNICH

PERUGIA

STRASBOURG

VENICE

WIESBADEN

ZURICH

Grand German-Austrian

Music Festival Tour

visiting

MUNICH - BAYREUTH - SALZBURG

BAROQUE FESTIVAL, BAYREUTH

BREGENZ : GLYNDEBOURNE

EDINBURGH : WUERZBURG

VIENNA - MENTONE - ORANGE

*Tickets, Accommodation · Travel Arrangements
Special Tours*

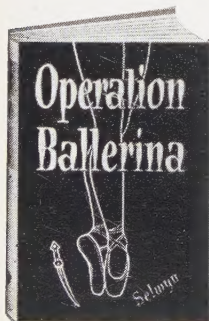
Full details from



GARDINER TRAVEL SERVICE

189 REGENT STREET LONDON W.1

Telephone : REGent 1416 and 1540



Operation Ballerina

By SELWYN

The story of a man who will not give up the dancer he loves and follows her to Moscow itself. Selwyn grips his reader with the mounting excitement of one man's struggle against the impersonal might of power politics. **10/6 net**

"Tense and exciting." *The Sphere*

The Publishers are **HODDER & STOUGHTON**

London County Council

FINSBURY PARK OPEN AIR THEATRE

BALLET RAMBERT

8th - 20th June

Repertoire includes

SWAN LAKE (Act II) ★ LES SYLPHIDES

WINTER NIGHT ★ MOVIMIENTOS

FIREFLIES ★ FACADE

HOUSE OF CARDS ★ CZERNY-ANA

PLAISANCE

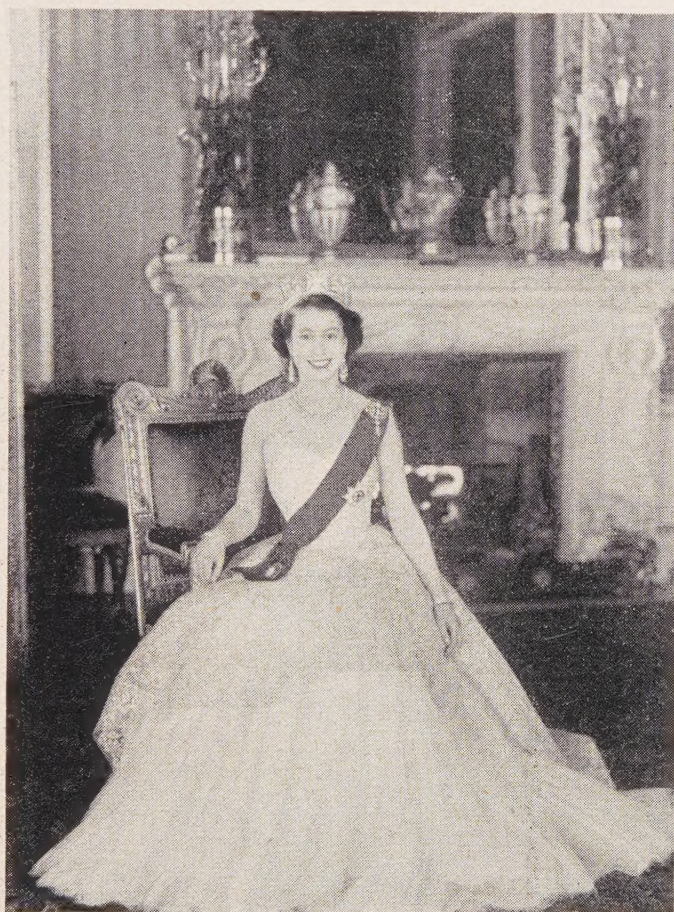
CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS

EVENINGS at 7.30 MATINEES SATURDAYS at 2.30

ADMISSION 1/6 - 5/-

Box Office Open Daily, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.

Tel.: STA. 6935 (495)



Homage to the Queen

One hundred and twenty-five years ago a Covent Garden audience joined with artists and orchestra to sing their homage to their young Queen Victoria on the night of her Coronation. On June 2nd, 1953, four of our leading ballerine—Fonteyn, Grey, Elvin and Nerina—will join in dancing their homage to Queen Elizabeth II. We can think of no more beautiful or fitting tribute than this to our lovely and beloved young Queen, or a fairer token of rejoicing at her Coronation, and in this act of homage "Ballet Today" and its readers join with all their hearts.

"My favourite role—I have none"—

says MARGOT FONTEYN

MARGOT FONTEYN lay on the couch in her new penthouse in Be'gravia and laughed at me. You can't get *angry* with somebody so utterly charming, friendly and un pompous. But when your job is to write about "Margot Fonteyn's Favourite Role" and she refuses to admit to one, you feel frustrated!

"I'm sorry, I really am," she said. "But I *hate* admitting to a favourite anything. Once you tell somebody you have a favourite, to imagine something, chocolates with hard centres and caviar—then you're stuck with them for ever. Everybody insists on giving you caviar for supper. And whenever you get a present it's chocolates with hard centres. After a time you get to hate the very sight of them.

"I like different things at different times. It's the same with dancing. I like change."

Suddenly the bantering smile left her expressive face. Utterly serious

for a moment, Margot moved her expressive hands as if to push away something which encircled her. "It's against everything I believe to become identified with anything, to be confined, labelled. I want to feel, over everything in life, that I can change as I go along. What I feel one year isn't necessarily what I will feel the next. I hate to be tied down."

Though probably she would deny it hotly, I feel that this "philosophy of life," this belief that people must and should change as they grow older and more experienced is, indeed, the one fixed, constant belief in Margot's life. "People should progress as they get older," she continued, and she frowned as she tried to explain.

"You must do what you are doing with all the concentration you have. But you mustn't look back. You must look forward, you must change. If you don't, you will be boring to yourself and other people. And if you

are a dancer, your dancing will become static and dull."

Anybody who has seen Margot dance knows that she gives everything she has, each time. Each time the ballet, whatever it is, is a fresh challenge, approached with a fresh mind. It is something different, separate, not joined on to the last time she danced it. "Dancing is just a job," says Margot casually. But each time it is an entirely separate job, a single act of creation, and when you talk to her you feel she would like everybody who sees her to approach her dancing as a single performance, not as something in a chain.

"All ballets are fun when you are doing them well," she said. "When you do them badly, it's awful. If I'm doing something really well—then it's my favourite. But for that day only. If I did it not so well the next night, then it certainly wouldn't be my favourite!"

From the great eminence to which hard work and supreme talent have taken her, Margot seems to look back with a certain nostalgia to the old, climbing days. "I don't mean it to sound conceited. But it is one of the penalties of getting to the top that you don't get a chance to do the dances which are 'fun,' not quite so exacting. I would love to do *Hamlet* again, for instance. Or *Façade*, on tour for Ensa. That was wonderful. When you become *prima ballerina* you always have to do the big ballets, for that's what people want to see you in. And they are always so frightening you can't call them *fun*."

When you remember that "*Façade* on tour" meant the dark days of war, when the Sadler's Wells Company, to the accompaniment of two out-of-tune pianos and the wail of sirens, danced on rickety, improvised platforms in freezing army camps after long, blacked-out journeys, you glimpse for a moment the strain of a peacetime Covent Garden performance.

Margot Fonteyn told me that she found *Giselle* perhaps a little easier from the technical point of view than *Swan Lake*. "It is more tiring in the length of time you are dancing—you run about much more—but I don't get so tired. It's not so technically exacting—it was written fifty years earlier, remember."

A London audience, Margot declares, is much more critical than a provincial or foreign audience.



Odetta in "*Lac des Cygnes*," with Michael Somes.

Baron



The Miller's Wife in "The Three-Cornered Hat."

Baron

thing she talked about—class. "Perhaps really dancing is the most fun in class. You do a little bit, trying and trying until it comes right perhaps at the very end. You concentrate as hard as you possibly can. And it is quite wonderful when you get it right." Here we can glimpse the perfectionist, looking never backwards, utterly concentrated on the supreme challenge of one utterly perfect step.

That is the dancer's attitude about her own dancing. But Margot's feeling about the audience's attitude is different. "Dancers don't want the audience to have too much technical knowledge. We don't care if they know the right word for an *entrechat*, for instance. We want them to love ballet, and watch it intelligently, but as a whole, not in detail, for ballet is a spectacle which should be seen as a whole and judged like that. And when you hear an audience really enthusiastic, after a performance which you yourself feel was good, that is a most wonderful feeling—every dancer loves applause, when the evening has gone well."

Margot Fonteyn is hard on ballet writers and ballet talkers. "There are too many books written about dancing. Too many magazines take it too seriously! That is why I always say I'll never write a book. It would bore me utterly, and I can't imagine why it shouldn't bore anybody else."

She says she doesn't like to talk about ballet. And when she does this, Margot isn't being petulant or unhelpful. She is speaking the absolute truth. Friendly gossip, general talk on books, food, pictures, travel—all these are discussed wherever she is

contd. on p. 22

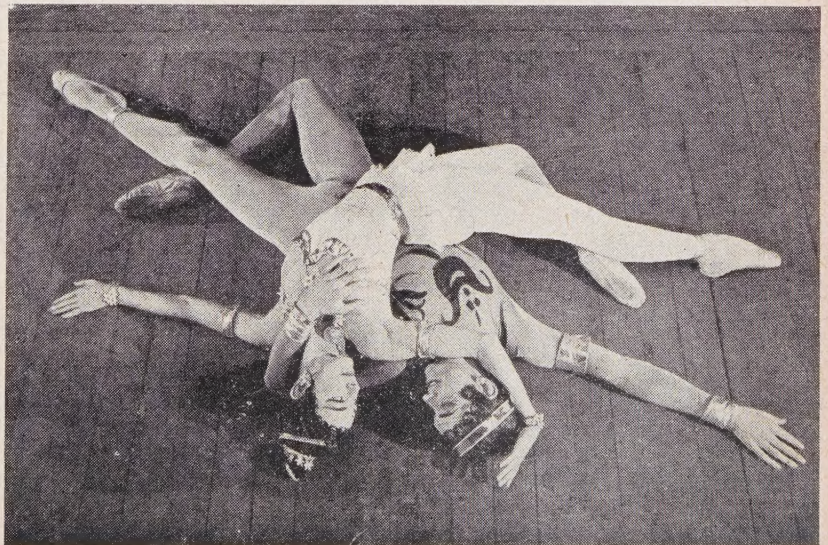
seemed to come through the next "You're at home," she said. "The audience has known you, perhaps, when you did a certain role at your very best. They naturally expect you to be that way the next time they see you. If you fall below that best, they feel cheated. And so it is a strain for the dancer. There's something, too, about Covent Garden itself. It's a very difficult theatre, I think. Much more difficult, for instance, than the New Theatre, where we used to be."

Again Margot's eyes took on that faintly nostalgic look. "On tour things are usually easier. Everybody in the company gets a zip because they are somewhere perhaps for the first time, certainly for a short time, one night or two. You feel you must give your best, it gives you a little extra something, you feel there is something a little different to lift you all up." The same thing, she told me, happens if there is something different during a Covent Garden season, Markova's guest appearance, for instance. She did not add the tremendous "lift" the Company got on the night she herself returned after her recent illness and long absence.

The American tour was exhausting, Margot admitted. "But though the journeys were tiring, I was far less so when we came home than I am after a long London season. That exhausts me completely, in a different way. On a tour like that some things are relatively easy. You dance the same

things, neatly packed up and ready, everywhere you go, and you know that when you get say, to Chicago, everybody is tremendously excited to see you, most of them haven't seen you before, there is a great feeling of challenge and excitement which helps you give your best, without the nagging fear that you may let down your previous best. It's easier."

This love of anything which is in any way routine you glimpsed behind her words. And the same thing



The female "Tiresias," with John Field.

Roger Wood

Pioneering Ballet in Canada

THE problems of maintaining a professional ballet company in Canada are almost overwhelming. From coast to coast of Canada is a journey of 4,000 miles, and, the population of this vast country being only 11 millions, to reach this widely-scattered public means constant travelling, with many one-night stands and long train journeys in between. This is very costly, since in Canada theatrical companies are not given special rates by the railways as they are in England. Again, there are proper theatres in only the larger cities in Canada—Montreal, Toronto, London (Ontario), Halifax and Vancouver; for the rest a ballet company must do the best it can with whatever accommodation offers.

But in Canada the pioneering spirit is far from dead; and about three years ago a group of Canadian businessmen and women, anxious that their great country should excel in the arts as in other fields, formed themselves into the National Ballet Guild of Canada to promote and finance a Canadian Ballet. They invited Celia Franca to visit Canada to advise them. On arrival, with the help of the Canadian Dance Teachers' Association, she set out on a coast-to-coast talent-scouting expedition; and, as a result, the National Ballet Com-

pany of Canada was formed under her artistic direction.

Then pioneer work began with a vengeance. Previously the rare visits of foreign ballet companies provided the only professional ballet the Canadian public ever saw, and this only in the few larger cities. For the rest there were occasional amateur performances given by ballet schools, and anyone choosing dancing as a career must either open a school or go abroad. It is small wonder that Miss Franca's talent-scouting expedition caused great excitement among Canadian dancers, and that competition was keen.

The chosen dancers were trained intensively for six weeks at the first of the National Ballet Guild summer schools which are now an annual event in Toronto, and the company set forth on their travels. They travel in two special cars, with kitchen and sleepers, with the scenery and props packed into a third. On arrival at their destination, the stage-manager gives the theatre a quick look-over and then decides what scenery to unload for use. The dancers may find themselves one night in luxurious dressing-rooms with velvet hangings, the next sitting in a row on the floor of a corridor, and the next making-up at school desks with eyebrow pencils

dropping into the inkstands. But it is all in the day's work; and the enthusiasm with which they are greeted makes it all amply worth while.

The Canadian ballet season lasts from September until the end of April, including a six-week rehearsal period. During the off-season the dancers do all sorts of jobs. Some work as garage-hands, some do nursing and domestic work, while those who have managed to save enough money spend the time studying with Anthony Tudor or Margaret Craske. One way or another everybody carries on, in season and out of season; and it is a great source of pride to Miss Franca to see them now all so beautifully "streamlined." When she first gathered them together they were, she says, decidedly gawky, and there was hardly anyone who did not bulge in all the wrong places!

Finance, distance, lack of accommodation, bulges—even these are not the whole story, for the story of the company's struggles over sets and costumes is quite an epic in itself. In England if you want the one or the other you can approach any artist or builder for scenery and there is always someone handy and able to make a passable costume. Not so in Canada. For one thing, as in the



Finale from "Les Pommes," ballet based on French-Canadian folk-songs. Music arranged by Hector Gratton: choreography—Celia Franca: costumes—Kay Ambrose.

Gene Draper, Toronto

United States, there is that ever-present bogey, "The Unions," and it is only in the larger cities that anyone knows how to make a *tutu*. It was a lucky day when Kay Ambrose appeared on the scene, for she is a mine of information on everything pertaining to ballet, and she set to work to teach dressmakers how to make *tutus*, and to teach the dancers how to make up, besides designing lovely costumes for them.

The company, besides possessing excellent soloists, has two *ballerine* of quality, one—Lois Smith—a lyrical dancer and the other—Irene Apine—who shines in roles like *Coppelia* and the *Sugar-Plum Fairy*. Their respective husbands, David Adams (a first-rate dancer, previously with Metropolitan Ballet) and Juri Gotshalks, make perfect partners for them.

At present the repertoire consists of *Les Sylphides*, *Giselle*, Acts I and II of *Coppelia*, Act II of *Casse Noisette* and *Prince Igor*, while the big event of last season was the production of Anthony Tudor's *Jardin aux Lilas*. These were all produced by Miss Franca, while in addition all-Canadian works like *Etude*, *Ballet Composite* and *Le Pommier* are being produced. This summer the company has been invited to Ted Shawn's summer school at Jacob's Pillow—the first time an invitation has been issued to a non-American company. There Anthony Tudor will supervise *Jardin aux Lilas* and produce *Gala Performance*, and later a new ballet as well. The National Ballet of Canada can look back with pride on the achievements of its first two years, and if the future holds plenty of hard work in store, it is full of promise.

DOROTHY PRATT.

Ballet on Television

WALTER GORE is an old friend to balletomanes. He has now formed his own company and on April 21 under the combined production of Kenneth Wright and Naomi Capon, The Walter Gore Ballet danced his newest choreographic work, the *Birth-day Suite in D* to the music composed by Michael Tippett in honour of the birth of Prince Charles.

Walter Gore is as much of an authority on English traditional dance as he is on the classical ballet; and it was the former idiom which he used in this case, bringing happy



Some members of the National Ballet in the Grandstand Show at the Canadian National Exhibition, 1952. The stage was 300 yards wide, in an auditorium made to seat 24,000

recollections of his earlies, *Bartlemas Dances* and *Simple Symphony*.

Suite in D, although skilfully welded into an integral whole, was comprised of a suite of dances depicting the village celebrations of the birth of a child. The villagers brought food and playthings as gifts, and garlands to decorate the house; there was a courtship dance in which the village maidens (charmingly led by Paula Hinton) chose their future husbands; the wedding dance, and invocation of blessing upon the unborn children, in which Domini Callaghan led the feminine *corps-de-ballet* with a movingly tender subtlety; and the ballet ended with an *ensemble* dance of celebrations for the birth of the child with the boys doing leapfrog and hobby-horse

Although it was difficult to see some of the *ensemble* work to the best advantage on the television screen, the production was fresh and pleasing and served to whet the appetite for the sight of this new company on the stage.

Rather less successful was Christian Simpson's production of David Paltenghi's *House of Cards* on May 4.

This ballet was originally designed for Ballet Workshop at the Mercury

Theatre, where it achieved such well deserved popularity that it was adapted for the Ballet Rambert repertoire.

For television David Paltenghi, who has recently taken a TV producer's course, made yet another adaptation which was potentially an excellent one for the purpose; yet this "eternal triangle" drama of the King, Queen and Knave of Hearts entirely lacked the intensity and pace of the stage version.

It is not easy to define the reason for this. The décor, re-designed by Leslie Hurry from his original stage designs, was as appropriate as ever. The roles were well characterised by David Paltenghi himself with Anne Heaton and John Field from the Sadler's Wells Ballet, and Monteverdi's music came over very well. Yet excitement was conspicuously lacking.

The angles of viewing may have had more than a slight influence upon this fact, for in the original version the choreographer had made excellent but restrained use of the oblique line of dance. In the TV version, "angles" were used far more for pictorial than for dramatic effect.

LISA GORDON-SMITH.

DANCE AND LIFE IN SOUTH INDIA



Central, Bombay

If you aspire to be a great dancer like Shanta—

THE OTHER MIND" is the Balinese name for the state of being attained by a dancer to whom perfect technique has become second nature, and who is thus able to express with his body a world of ideas and feelings outside the powers of ordinary human beings to express. Beryl de Zoete's book is a study of two of the great schools of the dance of Southern India, Kathakali, the dance-drama of Malabar, and Bharata Natya, the classical solo dance. It is not merely a treatise on dancing; for, as she says, the dance tradition of any people is a reflection of its history, environment and, above all, of its religious beliefs. In India it is impossible so much as to begin to understand the dance without a knowledge of these beliefs and a host of other things as well.

So she invites the reader to accompany her on a tour of exploration, explaining as she goes the nature and significance of what she meets by the way. She relates ancient legends of gods and heroes, whose original

framework has become overgrown with a jungle of associated ideas like the great temples of Angkor, the glory of whose sculptured colonnades and terraces is still visible from beneath the centuries-old tangle of foliage.

She takes the reader to forest-girt temples where the great Kathakali dance-dramas are enacted at night by the light of flames; to the shores of the Indian Ocean, where a great devil-dancing festival is held once a year. She (and the reader) miss the devil-dancing, but hear many strange tales including that of a conjuror who could stop a train whenever the fancy took him, and defy all efforts of the engine-driver to make it move an inch. She visits dancing schools in the byways of cities and in out-of-the-way villages and tells of the rigorous discipline that students must undergo for as much as sixteen hours a day for many years in their search for perfection. Not only the arms, legs and body are subjected to intensive training, but the fingers, eyes (two hours a day for these), cheeks, nose and chin

have their individual parts to play in the orchestration of the dance. In India the dance is inseparable from the music, and the dancing body is another instrument providing a counterpoint of movement to the sounds of the drum, the vina, flute or singing voice to enact stories of heroes and demons, men, women and gods.

She holds that to write about the dance one must follow the inspiration of Paul Valery's beautiful dialogue *L'Ame et la Danse*, not merely describing the movement but using words to conjure up the spirit of the dance.

The Other Mind, which is superbly illustrated, is not a book for casual reading, nor is it a book of reference. It has no index. It is a book to explore, to lose oneself in, to return to again and again to renew the experiences recorded in its pages of the wonderful land and peoples of India, whose gods and heroes are not distant abstractions or figures of a dead past, but living and present realities adored with a fervour, desired with passion, or loved like a favourite child or brother—a relationship with the Unseen that the West has never known, or has long since forgotten.

DOROTHY PRATT.

The Other Mind: by Beryl de Zoete.
(Gollancz, 52s. 6d.)



—you must begin young.

Bustelli of Nymphenburg



British Museum
A character of the Commedia dell'Arte.

THE Nymphenburg Palace at Munich made a magnificent setting for the brilliant sophisticated Court of the Elector of Bavaria. Fire-work displays and spectacular outdoor entertainments took place in the palace grounds and an exotic pleasure craft, with billowing painted sails and rowed by eighty rowers with scarlet oars, added a festive note of colour to the canal.

Designed by Cuvilliés, the famous French architect, the Residenz Theatre adjoined the palace and, until it was destroyed by bombing during the last war, it was one of the most perfect examples of rococo art in existence. It held only six hundred and thirty-seven people and from the dull gold and crimson auditorium, with its four tiers of boxes and magnificent chandelier, the aristocratic audiences of 18th century Munich watched matchless performances of the Italian opera and ballet, which at that time held sway in every country in Europe except France.

In this cultivated society, the collecting of porcelain ranked in esteem with the delights of the theatre and the excitements of the chase and, in 1761, the Elector moved the site of his porcelain factory from a hunting lodge at Neudeck, in the suburbs of Munich, to the grounds of the Nymphenburg Palace.

Founded in 1747, the factory enjoyed its earliest successes under the directorship of Count Von Haimhausen, with Joseph Jacob Ringler from Vienna as chief *arcanist* in charge of the modelling and technical processes. Ringler was followed in 1757 by J. P. R. Härte, a gifted artist whose reputation has been overshadowed by the genius of Franz

Anton Bustelli, a young Swiss-Italian sculptor who came over the mountains from Lugano and infused the fresh charm of Bavarian rococo with Latin warmth and fire.

Little is known of his early life and training but, in the years between 1754 and 1763, he established the fame of Nymphenburg for all time, his only rival in the field of ceramic sculpture being the great Kaendler of Meissen.

Bustelli's happiest inspiration was the theatre, and he found his models in the ballets, operas and masquerades of the Court or among the strolling players of the *Commedia dell'Arte*, who provided popular entertainment for both rich and poor. His ballet dancers are slim, graceful creatures and by a provocative tilt

restraint, he added a touch here and there to increase the sensuous appeal of the milk-white porcelain and to accentuate the beauty of line or a suggestion of movement.

Johann Peter Melchior, the next most important sculptor employed by the factory, came to Nymphenburg from Höchst and Frankenthal at a time of violent reaction against the extravagances of the rococo. A great friend of the poet Goethe, he modelled a bust of "the poet of the *Sorrows of Young Werther*", done from the life," and he was heart and soul in the neo-classical movement which was then sweeping Europe. His figures are warm and human and, except for occasional lapses into cloying sentimentality, are attractive representatives of the period. Using colour more freely than his predecessors, he covered faces and limbs with pale rose pink and he also used colour to simulate the elaborately striped or flowered materials then in vogue.

After his death in 1822, Nymphenburg continued to keep up with modern trends and it has consistently produced excellent porcelain of good design, including some interesting figurines by J. Wackerle and other contemporary modellers, but its reputation rests securely upon its glorious past, upon Bustelli's laughter-loving dancers who live in a world of gay rococo untouched by the troubles of our time.

MARGARET SHARP.



British Museum
Dancer, by J. P. R. Härte.

of the head, a swaying hip or the tantalizing drapery of a skirt he achieves an enchanting effect of liveliness and humour. The male characters are elegant products of the age, sometimes bored or insolent, occasionally effeminate, but always witty and worldly wise. At one time it was thought that many of the figurines were modelled from life and represented important personages at Court, but it is now known that the majority of them derive straight from the theatre.

Earlier in the century, Kaendler had used a flat base decorated with leaves and flowers in relief but, later, he invented a new type incorporating a scroll which subsequently became an integral part of the design. Known as *rocaille* work, it was developed still further by Bustelli and added greatly to the harmony and balance of his figure groups. Using colour with



British Museum
Leda.

THE CHINESE THEATRE

II

AFTER the fall of the T'ang in A.D. 906 parts of North China fell under the sway of various Tartar tribes. Eventually in the 13th century the great Mongol Empire founded by Ghenghiz Khan the Universal Lord, extended from the confines of Asia to the heart of Europe and, for about 150 years, during the Pax Tartarica as it is now called, it became possible for the first and only time in history to pass freely and in security through the whole length of Europe and Asia. In 1280 China became part of this Mongol empire. Though China's power declined, contact was maintained with the cultures of other lands. Bands of strolling players were maintained at the Courts of the Tartar sovereigns, great attention was paid to the training of actors and the drama flourished in several different styles. The plays and novels written during the Mongol era rank with the finest literature China has produced. The period of the Yuan Dynasty is more famous than any other in the annals of the Chinese theatre and the actors' profession attained a dignity which it subsequently lost and has only very recently regained.

In 1368 the Mongols were driven out and a Chinese Dynasty, the Ming, reigned once more in China. The Ming opened with great splendour but very soon intercourse with foreign countries was cut off and China "withdrew into the comfortable glow of her own self-sufficiency." Many great plays and novels were produced and, in the theatre, *k'un ch'u*, the soft, melodious music of the south replaced the northern style of music which the Mongols had brought with them from their home in the wind-swept deserts of the steppe, but actors now became a class of outcasts.

In 1644 China was conquered once more by invaders from the north and a Manchu Dynasty, the Ch'ing, reigned in Peking until China became a Republic in 1912. During the first half of their reign, under a succession of great Manchu Emperors, warriors as well as patrons of the arts, it seemed as if the glories of the T'ang had been revived. Then military plays became the rage, *k'un ch'u* decayed and the music of the lute was ousted by the crashing of drums, gongs, bells and cymbals. It is not surprising that even in the open-air performances in Temple courtyards a Chinese orchestra did not sound pleasing to the

western ear. This is how it was described by an Englishman attached to Lord Macartney's famous mission in 1793 to the Court of the Emperor Ch'ien Lung:

"By collecting together in a small space a dozen bulls, the same number of jackasses, a gang of tinkers round a copper cauldron, some cleavers and marrowbones, with about thirty cats; then letting the whole commence bellowing, braying, hammering and caterwauling together — some idea may be formed of the melody of a Chinese orchestra."

After the death of Ch'ien Lung in 1799 there was a sudden and disastrous decline. Music and the arts decayed and, under the "unequal treaties" imposed by foreign powers, China sank into deep humiliation. It was not until the beginning of the 20th century that a national revival began and, as has always happened in China, this was accompanied by a revival in the arts. Military plays, bearing some resemblance to our ballet, had all but ousted the splendid dramas of the Mongol period but the artists and scholars who now sought careers on the stage found that what the audience liked best was the *k'un ch'u* and the classical opera-drama-ballet of the Ming and Mongol eras.

In Mei Lan Fang this movement found a leader whose name should go

down to posterity as the greatest actor of all time. The innovations he has introduced have been inspired by the traditions of the past. Foreigners often get the impression that Chinese plays are quite interminable but what they see in the course of an afternoon is not one play but a selection of favourite acts taken from a number of different plays. As there is no scenery or stage setting to be changed, there is no pause between the acts and the foreigner has no means of knowing when one act has ended and another has begun. The leader of the orchestra, which is seated on the stage in full view of the audience, merely beats a few notes on a gong and the new play begins. Mei Lan Fang has revived the old custom of presenting whole plays of four or five acts. He has woven graceful dances into plays which have been written specially for him and the gorgeous costumes of the T'ang and earlier periods, which he has brought back into the theatre, add greatly to the beauty of the scene.

Mei Lan Fang plays only female roles for which he is well suited by reason of his high voice and slender build. In the classical opera-drama-ballet slave girls and attendants, as well as the famous beauties who have played so large a role in Chinese history, provide many leading parts worthy of an actor of his genius. His favourite role is Yang Kuei Fei, the famous concubine of the equally famous Emperor Ming Huang, and the play in which he finds his favourite part is *Yang Kuei Fei Tsui Chiu, The Drunken Beauty*. Drinking is not the vice it is in Europe and the sight of a famous Court lady drinking too much wine does not shock a Chinese audience. Yang Kuei Fei is jealous because Ming Huang is supping with another lady. She drinks cup after cup and "as the wine begins to take effect she performs some charming dances in which other Court ladies join and a beautiful inebriated ballet is performed. The effect of the dancers in the ancient Chinese dress, the style with the long sleeves taken over by the Japanese as the kimono, is much like a vision of fluttering multi-coloured butterflies."

The Nun Craves Love provides Mei Lan Fang with another of his favourite roles. This remarkable play is a monologue with only one character, the Nun. "When this little Nun sings and dances her moods through the medium of Mei Lan Fang, poetry, music and movement fuse in the subtlest way imaginable . . . Whoever composed this series of solo dances was a master of his craft; they



Mei Lan Fang in "The Nun craves Love."

(continued p. 19)



"Dragon and Phoenix." Mei Lan Fang in the centre.

China Reconstructs



Mei Lan Fang and Chu Kuei Fang in "The Patriotic Beauty." Posture in the Flute and Plume Dance.



Mounting an imaginary horse. Mei Lan Fang in "Mu-Lan, the Disguised Warrior-Maiden."



Mei Lan Fang in "The Final Parting between the King and his Favourite." Posture in the sword-dance indicating preparedness for an attack.



Mei Lan Fang as "The Drunken Beauty."

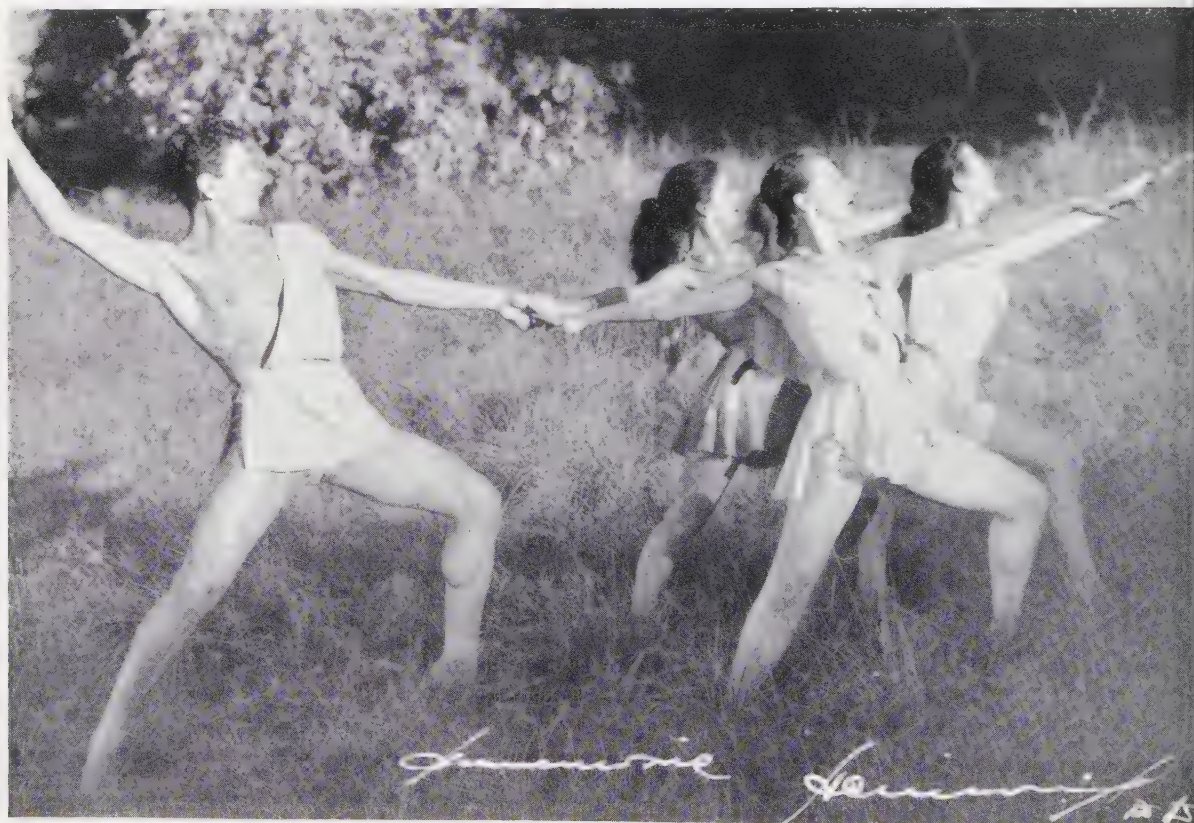
China Pictorial



An open-air performance of " Cuadro Griego."

Vassili Lambrinos —

He is tall, statuesque, grey-eyed. He always wanted to dance, and in his boyhood spent his spare time studying with Elie Zouradi. War sent him to Southern Rhodesia, where he trained as a pilot with the R.A.F. After the war he had to choose between flying and dancing. He chose dancing, and went back to Greece to study, thence to Paris and London to work with Preobrajenskaya, Knaiseff and Volkova. He joined Knaiseff in a tour of South America, and stayed behind to form his own Ballet de Camera of four dancers. His company now numbers ten, with guest artists in addition, and tours all over South America.



Vassili Lambrinos, Amalia Lozano, Angelica Morini and Virginia Carlovitch in "Narcissus," the legend of the beautiful youth who fell in love with his own image mirrored in a fountain. While gazing at it he fell into the water. Some say the gods took pity on him and turned him into a marble statue. The music is Ravel's "Introduction and Allegro"



"Cuadro Griego" (Grecian Frieze). A shepherd dreams that the figures on a Greek vase come to life.
Music—Debussy's "Saraband."

— Choreographer from Greece

Vassili Lambrinos works eighteen hours a day as teacher, dancer and choreographer and supervises everything down to the smallest detail. He believes that choreography must evolve out of music and cannot be imposed upon it. He has a great love for the Romantics and for the classic purity of Debussy and Ravel. His first major work was set to Liszt's "Dante Sonata." London will see his "Grieg Concerto," a symphonic ballet for eight dancers, in July, when he is producing it with Festival Ballet.

Amalia Lozano and Vassili Lambrinos
in "Grieg Concerto."



Photos by: Annemarie Heinrich, Buenos Aires

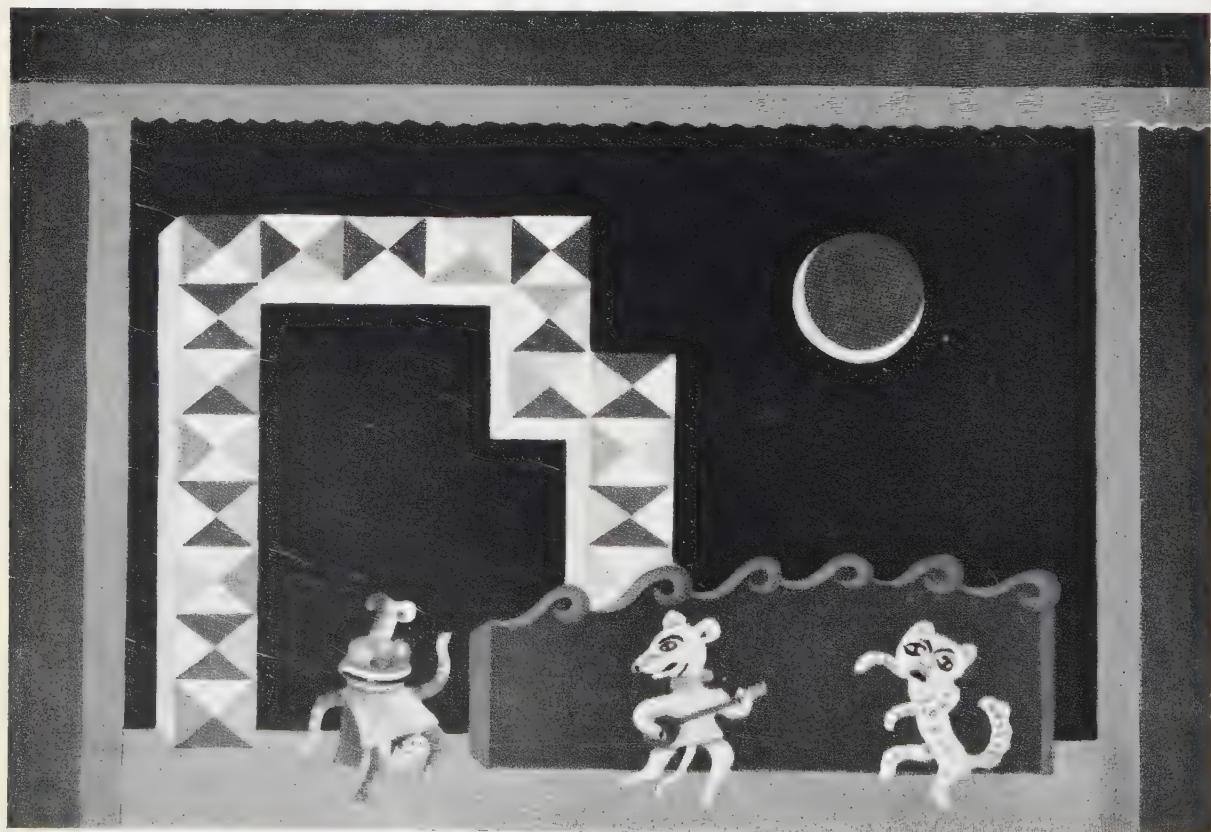


Guillermo Arriaga, Antonio de la Torre, and Helena Jordan in "El Sueno y la Presencia." A young seller of carnival masks dreams that the cardboard skulls that adorn her stall come to life and dance. She finds herself dancing a love-dance with Death. A funeral cortege approaches, and with horror she sees the corpse is herself. Designs—Jose Chavez Morado: choreography—Guillermo Arriaga.



Xavier Francis, Rocio Sagaon and Guillermo Keys Arenas in "El Invisible," the story of a girl who falls in love with an invisible being who dies, and causes a tree to bear strange fruits. Her love is consummated through Fire and Wind, who tell her she is to be mother of a hero. Designs—Miguel Corvarrubias: choreography—Elena Noriega.

photos: de Narvarrete



Setting for "El Renacuajo Paseador," a ballet based on a nonsense-rhyme about Mr. and Mrs. Frog, Mr. and Mrs. Mouse and Mrs. Cat. Design—Carlos Merida: choreography—Martha Bracho.

BALLET IN MEXICO

THE exhibition of Mexican art at the Tate Gallery in London has aroused the greatest interest and probably provoked more discussion than any exhibition in recent years. Some of us seeing for the first time examples of the art of this great nation of the New World have found it almost repellent in its violence, its emphasis on the death-motif and the savage cruelty which much of it suggests; others have admired its primitive strength, its extraordinary inventiveness, colour and variety and the sense which it gives of an irresistible life-force welling up unceasingly in the spirit of its creators in defiance of that ever-present Death of which they are so keenly aware. But nobody who has seen this exhibition can fail to wonder at it.

It was with greatly quickened interest, therefore, that we heard news of recent developments in the art of the dance in Mexico. It is still in its early stages, and our impressions are derived solely from reading about it and studying pictures, but it is obviously a development of true and vital importance. Our complacency received a number of salutary jolts too in learning something of how European ballet appears to the Mexican spectator.

Ballet in Europe, from a Mexican viewpoint, is in fact in a very sorry state. We are seen to be mainly engaged in trying to fan into some semblance of a flame the dying embers of classical ballet, a form of art inherited from the past and now outdated. Even Paris, for long the centre of inspiration for the whole civilised world, has nothing new to show but the coquettish modernism which spices the creations of Roland Petit. London is slightly better off, having in the Sadlers Wells Ballet what is universally admitted to be a first-class ballet organisation; but here again the main emphasis is on reviving the classics of the past even though a certain amount of experimentation goes on in the work of such choreographers as Tudor, Ashton, Howard and Cranko. Elsewhere in Europe the picture is seen as one of almost unrelieved gloom, lightened only fitfully by the work of such artists as Margaret Wallman. Aurelio Miloss, unattached to any particular ballet company, is fighting a solitary battle for new ideas, while Kurt Jooss, Katherine Dunham, Ruth Page, José Limón and Pearl Primus have made heroic efforts to combat the general apathy of Europeans towards new ideas in the art of the dance.

It is—hang your heads, balletomanes, unrepentant addicts of *Lac des Cygnes*, *Giselle* and *Les Sylphides*!—in the New World that new ideas have fallen on the most fruitful ground, finding such exponents as Isadora Duncan, Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman, with their new plastic and rhythmic ideas. Oriental inspiration, the study of the pre-classical dance, religious motifs, the folklore of the American Indians and of Eastern and Southern Europe—all these have helped to bring the new dance to birth. But of all the influences at work, the new Mexican dance owes most of all to the inspira-

tion to the inspiration of José Limón and Doris Humphrey, but already native choreographers, some of them pupils of these distinguished artists, are producing works of originality and merit.

The Mexican Ballet at present has a nucleus of twelve professional dancers and about as many more who will soon attain professional standard. The company has had many difficulties, financial and otherwise, to contend with, but many of these are due to inexperienced administration and will be solved in time. It is hoped to institute an experimental studio to try out new works before they are given large-scale public per-



Antonio della Torre, Guillermo Arriaga and G. K. Arenas dancing "el pascola" in "La Hija del Yori." The leader of a band of defeated warriors falls in love with a girl captive. His bride sees the lovers trying to flee, and they are recaptured and put to death, but the bride too has lost her love. Designs—A. L. Mancera: choreography—Rosa Reyna.

tion received from North America. It is in fact a spontaneous product of a vast new continent, with a vitality and freedom of movement expressive of broadening horizons, with colour and rhythm as its principal qualities. It is born of the very soil of America, and is in no way derivative as English ballet is from Russian, and Russian in turn from French and Italian.

The modern dance of Mexico can now look back on ten years of history, five of preparatory work and five of achievement. The academy of Mexican Dance enjoys State support, and will in time make Mexico one of the great dance centres of the world, for there is an abundance of native talent, choreographic, scenic and musical. Mexican ballet owes a particular debt

to the inspiration of José Limón and Doris Humphrey, but already native choreographers, some of them pupils of these distinguished artists, are producing works of originality and merit.

The period 1950-52 will in later years be seen to be a turning-point in the history of the Mexican dance, for during this period not only has there been a great influx of talent but experience has been enriched by contact with distinguished artists from North America, the interest of a growing public has been awakened, and a high ideal established. All who have participated in this great work have earned a place in the history of the art of Mexico.

DOROTHY PRATT,

With acknowledgements to
Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes
Mexico City

The promise of Svetlana Beriosova

I FIRST saw Svetlana Beriosova in 1947, when she was appearing with the Metropolitan Ballet at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith. She was quite a girl, about fifteen, and I recall that she danced one of the "Aurora" variations from the last act of *The Sleeping Beauty*. Technically it was beyond her powers, yet she revealed an appreciation of style unusual in so young a dancer. Moreover her features had a classic beauty, a serenity such as you see in certain Renaissance paintings of the Madonna. Similarly, her bearing suggested something of the gentle humility of a votary intent on rendering devoted service to the muse of her choice.

During the spring of the following year, Beriosova became principal dancer of the Metropolitan Ballet and achieved a distinct success as the soloist in John Tara's ballet, *Design for Strings*, which she followed up a few months later with her expressive dancing and mime in Frank Staff's *Fanciulla delle Rose*.

In 1949 the Metropolitan Ballet came to an end and Beriosova went to New York, where she remained until May, 1950, when Dame Ninette de Valois invited her to join the Sadlers Wells Theatre Ballet as solo dancer. Among the several roles she danced I recall her as the soloist in Howard's *Assembly Ball*, when she invested her dancing with elegance and mystery; her hair was decorated with starry flowers. In December, 1950, Cranko cast her for the role of Lamia in his new ballet, *Pastorale*. What a dazzling entrance she made with her graceful walk, her hair dressed a la grecque and wearing a purple peplum.

In September, 1951, *Casse-Noisette* was revived in a new edition by Ashton, and Beriosova danced the *pas de deux* in the "Snowflakes" entr'acte. How regal she looked, a true Snow Queen, her white dress glistening like hoar frost in the moonlight. She was also given the role of Swanilda in *Coppélia*. Owing to various circumstances I did not see her in this part until August, 1952,

when she danced it at Edinburgh during the Festival. Her *pirouettes* and supported turns were very finished, and her interpretation had an engaging charm and simplicity. Not that the rendering was flawless. In Act I, I thought that she received Coppélius's key as though she knew it would be handed to her, and, in Act II she took little interest in the plight of her sweetheart, poor drugged Franz.

In April, 1952, the Theatre Ballet returned to London from their Canadian-American tour, and in June Beriosova received the intimation that she was to be promoted to Covent Garden. Owing to illness, however, she could not be released from the Theatre Ballet until August. But in June she danced at Covent Garden as the Lilac Fairy in *The Sleeping Beauty*, her rendering distinguished by a noble bearing and gracious authority.

The ballet *Sylvia* was revived in September with new choreography by Ashton. In the last act Beriosova danced a short but lively variation as Ceres. In December she danced the role of Odette in Scene II of *Swan Lake*, a rendering which I thought showed great promise both for her lyrical dancing and her expressive mime.

In December there was a new production of the full length *Swan Lake*. Beriosova appeared in Ashton's "Pas de Six" and as one of the Swan-maiden Leaders in Scenes II and IV. She gave distinction and bravura to the Pas, while her lyrical dancing and dignified bearing were well suited to the important role of Leader.

In February of the present year, in Act II of Gluck's opera, *Orpheus*, she danced a solo in the "Dance of the Blessed Spirits." This was a lyrical dance composed by Ashton, in which Beriosova, in classic robe, danced with a dove poised on one hand, which dove she carried and allowed seemingly to fly away and then gently recapture. It was a poetical conception to which she did full justice.

In March Cranko again chose her to dance the leading role in his new ballet, *The Shadow*. In this she was a maiden guarded by a shadow, symbolized by a dancer wearing a voluminous cloak which now enveloped her, now revealed her, her ivory arms and pale face and bosom emerging tantalisingly from the confines of the cloak, like an entrancing vision appearing from a black



Romantic Love in "The Shadow."

Denis de Marney

vapour conjured up by some enchanter. Occasionally for a brief period, she was permitted to escape altogether from the hampering cloak, but when the youth who coveted her would take her in his arms, she drew back in maidenly alarm. Later, her confidence gained, she danced an *adage* which was most moving in its evocation of love.

Beriosova's dancing reveals very clearly that she has had a thorough training in the classical school of technique. Notice the smoothness of her turns and *pirouettes*, the line of her *arabesques*, her strong *jetés*, the sweep of her *développés*; her *pointes*, once inclined to be weak, have steadily gained in strength. She has a fine bearing and the poise of her head adjusts itself harmoniously to every movement of her torso.

She is tall and well built, and her feet are long, in proportion to her body. Her features are broad and pale, typically Slav, for she is of Lithuanian origin, with high cheekbones, relieved with expressive brown eyes. Her expression has retained its first sweet serenity as though she were dedicated to some exaltation of the spirit.

But what impresses me most about Beriosova is her noble presence, her sense of style, and her expressiveness—qualities which set her apart. Her arms move beautifully and gracefully; you feel that they are not the imitation of something taught, but the outward expression of what she is feeling inwardly, and these movements are so phrased that they take on an unusual depth and forcefulness. She is aware of that vital truth that while technical brilliance may dazzle it is for a short while only, whereas an interpretation that is deeply felt and communicated in the dancer's dancing makes a lasting impression on the spectator.

I know of few young dancers who have Beriosova's personality, and I can think of fewer still who offer such a wealth of promise. It will be interesting to see, as the years unfold, how that promise is fulfilled.

CYRIL BEAUMONT.

Fonteyn in Lac des Cygnes

ON the night that Margot Fonteyn was to dance her first full-length *Lac des Cygnes* for two years there was the feeling in the air at Covent Garden that this was to be an Occasion. The impatient staccato chords from the orchestra, and the little run and the *pas-de-chat* of *Odette's* first entrance released an explosion of that tense, high-pitched applause that only comes from an



Swanilda in "Coppelia."

Derek Allen

audience keyed-up with expectancy. Such a noise would seem enough to put to flight any ordinary swan, but this one continued the beautiful preening movements of her head in the way we have known and loved for so long, and we settled down in our seat determined not to miss the least nuance of this queen of *ballerine* as she danced the queen of ballets.

It is especially interesting to be able to place Fonteyn's performance of *Odette* alongside Markova's, like two lustrous pearls. These two *ballerine* are great artists, but that is about the only thing they have in common. In *Lac des Cygnes* the contrast is more vivid than even in *Giselle*. Markova's *Odette*, like her *Giselle*, is entirely other-worldly. In the development of her art she has universalised them. Neither is a finite human being, but an aspect of the Eternal Feminine that for a fleeting moment visits the earth, lingers awhile as if hesitating whether to leave her distant, timeless sphere for the fugitive ecstasies of human existence, and departs again

whither she came. It is impossible to say by what expressive miracle Markova conveys all this; but convey it she unmistakeably does, so much so that she leaves one with a sense of almost religious awe and the feeling that applause is out of place.

Fonteyn's great quality in the role of *Odette* (*Odile* we are heretical enough to regard as a mere theatrical necessity of a more or less disagreeable kind whom we would far rather see danced by someone else) is her deep humanity. Here really is the young girl passionately in love for the first time, the girl who has hungered for love and never before felt its spell, whose love burns with a pure, bright flame and who is riven from her beloved by the dark forces that lie in wait for true lovers. To see her change from a swan palpitating with fear into a maiden telling her heartbreaking story; to see her shrinking modesty and unbelievingness as the ardent *Prince* declares his undying love for her and, as the reality of his

(Contd. p. 19)

BALLET ROUND THE WORLD

Paris

On April 20 JANINE CHARRAT presented her new programme of ballet at the Champs Elysées Theatre. The most important work in her repertoire is *Les Algues* with scenario and designs by L. CASTELLI. The plot concerns a young man who teigns madness and thus obtains entry into the asylum where his mad fiancée is immured. He desires either to cure her of her madness or remain there with her, but his pretence is discovered and he is separated from her forever.

well and with precision and sensibility. His compatriot, the German dancer MARIA FRIS, is a pathetically insane coquette among the other unhappy inhabitants of the asylum.

JANINE CHARRAT and her company have spared no efforts in their presentation of *Les Algues*, which is being much discussed in Paris. JANINE CHARRAT has laudable ambitions, but her *Symphonie Classique de Prokofieff* (with her own choreography) and the *Pas de Trois Royal*, set to Variations by Brahms, (choreo-

enthusiasm into interpreting the work of this young choreographer.

Italy

To celebrate the International Motor Show at Turin its President, Count BISCARETTI DI RUFFIA, engaged the Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas, which performed at the Teatro Regio on April 24—26 with outstanding success. The orchestra of Radio Turin, with 75 players conducted by Mr. MACDERMOTT, musical director of the de Cuevas Ballet, was in fine form and demonstrated in *Piege de Lumiere*, *Prisonnier du Caucase* and *Somnambule* how much fine orchestral playing can add to a ballet performance—a matter which is too often overlooked. An anaemic orchestral accompaniment can ruin an otherwise fine performance.

After leaving Turin, the de Cuevas company set out on a tour comprising Nantes, Bordeaux, Lisbon and Rome, where they will take part in a film, *Carosello Napoletano* by M. A. GIANNINI, with choreography by MASSINE. At the end of June, the company will be appearing in Holland as a part of the Dutch Music Festival.

FERDINAND REYNA.



Scene from "Il Fiume Innamorato," mythological ballet by Renzo Bianchi presented at La Scala, Milan. Choreography—Margaret Wallmann; designs—Nicola Benois. The scene represents the court of Poseidon under the sea. The river Alfeo (Ugo dell'Aral) in human shape falls in love with the nymph Arethusa (Olga Amati), whom Artemis finally changes into a fountain.

Erio Piccagliani, Milan

An electronic musical instrument provides the accompaniment to this curious ballet and a voice explains the action as it unfolds. If these two elements, which are entirely superfluous, were removed *Les Algues*, which lasts nearly an hour, is a striking creation. Several of the scenes, like that of the young girl seized with madness and that of the farewell when the lunatics hold her back and the young man must leave her, are extremely moving. This is a human drama of great pathos but not, as has been said, an expressionist creation, for it is expressed in terms of pure dancing and the mad scenes are free of exaggeration. JANINE CHARRAT interprets the rôle of the young girl extremely well, and is partnered by PETER VAN DIJK, a young dancer from the Berlin Opera, who dances

graphy by YVES BRIEUX) call for much better interpreters. Only RENE BON and PETER VAN DIJK rise above the mediocrity of the rest of the company.

At a gala at the Theatre de Paris, PIERRE LACOTTE, young *premier danseur* of the Opera, presented several ballets. In *Vaincre*, to music by Bach, there were striking passages and in particular a *pas de huit* which seems to show that PIERRE LACOTTE is a coming choreographer. Other ballets like Kosma's *Chansons*, and *Inspirations* (performed partly without music) are interesting even if not free from outside influences. His colleagues from the Opera, MILES CLAVIER, RAYE, COLLENT, DAVRY DELAUBIER and MM. LUCIEN DUTHOIT, DUSAIGNE, RAOULT, LABIS and SARELLI threw themselves with

New York

The Spring season of the New York City Ballet at the City Center will offer several works which have not been seen as part of their repertoire before. These include a revival of LEW CHRISTENSEN's *Filling Station* to music by VIRGIL THOMSON, with costumes and décor by PAUL CADMUS (this ballet was produced originally for Ballet Caravan in 1938); TODD BOLENDER's *The Filly* to music by JOHN COLMAN, and probably a new ballet by JEROME ROBBINS possibly to music by BENJAMIN BRITTEN, though as yet this is not a certainty.

The company is scheduled to begin a four weeks' engagement at the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles on July 6 and, according to present plans, returns to New York to prepare for an eight to ten week European tour opening at La Scala, Milan, on September 14 and going thence to Genoa, Naples, Rome, Venice, Switzerland, Belgium and Paris (Palais de Chaillot). The company then returns to New York towards the latter part of November then bang! into a series of rehearsals for a full-length *Nutcracker* that BALANCHINE has been talking about for these many years. That's to be the opening morsel for Christmas Eve . . .

The ballet world had a surprise at the news that MELISSA HAYDEN had been signed by Ballet Theatre for their European tour on "a long-term contract" with "full ballerina status." With the possible exception of one or two people-in-the-know, everyone thought Miss Hayden to be very well satisfied with her New York City Ballet chores—certainly with the reviews and rôles she was drawing night after night. Can it be simply a matter of repertoire? We doubt it.

Another dancer to leave the New York City Ballet roster is BEATRICE TOMPKINS, who had danced with the Ballet since its inception and generally been associated with all Balanchine groups in the U.S. since the early thirties. Ballet fans will miss her excellent supporting performances.

The New York City Ballet has just announced the signing of MARIE-JEANNE (presumably as *ballerina* or top soloist). Until recently she danced with the de Cuevas company in Europe. MARIE-JEANNE is a Balanchine-trained dancer and has danced *ballerina* rôles with him on numerous occasions.

ALICIA MARKOVA, who has made a series of the most successful of all television appearances (due to that really clever choreographer JAMES STARBUCK, who knows how to present her at her best in a TV lens), will now have her own TV show. CHARLES KEBBE, producer of the Lili Palmer series on CBS-TV, had signed Markova to star in 13 fifteen-minute television films. She will deal with all subjects pertaining to ballet and the dance and will narrate as well as dance short pieces.

HOPE SHERIDAN.

Fonteyn in Lac des Cygnes

(Contd. from p. 17)

love dawns on her, to see the rapture of her expression as she leans with closed eyes on his shoulder encircled for the first time by a lover's arms—these are pure joy. The beauty of her dancing we have almost come to take for granted, yet on this wonderful evening there were moments of such loveliness that one could hardly bear them to pass—her arabesque when she prevented *Siegfried* shooting *von Rothbart*, and the moment in her *adage* when, poised on her point, she bent forward to clasp her ankle, with all the grace of a swan bending its neck to preen the feathers of its breast. We only wish that everyone could see them.

DOROTHY PRATT.

The Chinese Theatre

(Contd.)

are obviously the outcome of deep artistic experience. Loneliness, wistfulness, gaiety, *malaise*, nostalgia—the longing for motherhood even—are conveyed with a degree of sensibility and mimetic power that would amaze our ballerinas and balletomanes."

When China became a republic, her leaders cherished the illusion that China might win recognition as a Great Power if they imported wholesale the institutions of Western democracy and planted them in Chinese soil. Similar attempts were made to reform the theatre, but these bore little fruit until Japan launched her all-out

stage a sort of fairyland, something never seen on sea or land, something to take them out of themselves and this workaday world. What they want is something ordinary life has never given them and can never give. The characters they like to see portrayed are the Emperors, warriors, scholars and villains of past ages, who are as familiar to every peasant in the village audience as to the actors themselves. Every village has its own group of actors, and companies of strolling players travel widely over the countryside and at each town or village perform their plays on a stage erected in the Temple courtyard. The dramas they present are founded on the myths and legends of the past, on



"L'Amore Stregone" ballet by G. Martinez Sierra, presented at La Scala, Milan. Music—de Falla; choreography—Margaret Wallmann; designs—Felice Casorati. A gipsy, Candelas (Luciana Novaro) spurns the love of Carmelo (Giulio Perugini) because she is haunted by her dead lover (Ugo dell'Ara). The spell is broken by the ghost falling in love with her friend Lucia.

attack in 1937 and a New China began to emerge from the U-shaped bend of the Yellow River. During the last few years the Yangko dance—a folk-dance of this region—has swept through China and the theatre has gone back for fresh inspiration to the folk art which was the chief source of the classical drama. There have been great changes since 1937, but up to 1937 the attempts of foreign-educated enthusiasts to import the western style of drama, divested of both opera and ballet, were a dismal failure. The theatre remained out of touch with present-day life and continued to draw its material from ancient history to the neglect of modern conditions and problems.

What the Chinese love best, says a Chinese author quoted by Sir Reginald Johnstone, is to see on the

famous novels such as *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, which was written in the time of the Ming Dynasty. It contains 128 chapters and about 4,000 pages and "its pages are filled, but not overcrowded, with no less than four hundred characters." An even greater favourite is *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* one of the great novels of the Mongol era, which describes the stirring events of the period of some fifty years of chronic warfare that followed the break-up of the Han Empire in the third century A.D.—a period which has been compared with the Age of Chivalry in Europe. These novels, and many others, provide themes for innumerable plays that are still being acted in every part of China.

(To be continued)

J. T. PRATT.

NEWS

NEW BALLET

Blood Wedding, the new ballet being produced on June 5 by Sadlers Wells Theatre Ballet, owes its original conception to SOPHIE FEDOROVITCH, who brought the three collaborators — ISABEL LAMBERT, DENIS APIVOR and ALFRED RODRIGUES — together. The ballet is based on a play of the same name by the Spanish dramatist LORCA, and its creators share not only an intense interest in his work but a great love of Spain.

GLORIANA

JOHN CRANKO is responsible for the choreography in *Gloriana*, BENJAMIN BRITTEN's Coronation opera to be produced on June 8. He has devised a suite of dances — Pavane, Galliard, Lavolta and Coranto — for eight couples for the ballroom scene, a Morris Dance and a Masque, *The Union of Time and Concord*, in which the leading roles will be danced by SVETLANA BERIOVA and DESMOND DOYLE.

BALLET RAMBERT

The Ballet Rambert will start their Coronation summer tour on June 8 after a short break during which scenery and costumes have been renewed or refurbished. The season's repertoire of 15 ballets will include a full-length presentation of *Giselle*, in which MARY MUNROE succeeds to the role danced so wonderfully in the past by SALLY GILMOUR, and *Past Recalled*, a ballet by JACK CARTER acquired from Ballet Workshop.

There is to be a new production of *Swan Lake* (Act II) with costumes and décor by KENNETH ROWELL, the young Australian who designed his first ballet, *Winter Night*, for Ballet Rambert. *Les Masques* and *Mephisto Valse* will also be revived during the season.

SADLERS WELLS CHOREOGRAPHERS' GROUP

The Sadlers Wells Choreographers' Group are giving their second performance on Sunday, June 14, at 7.30 at Sadlers Wells Theatre. The programme will consist of new works by FIORELLA KEANE, DAVID BLAIR KENNETH MACMILLAN, DAVID POOLE

and GILBERT VERNON. There will also be a repeat performance of KENNETH MACMILLAN's *Somnambulism*. Admission is restricted to members of the Vic-Wells Association, and there will be a charge of 1/- each for programmes.

LONDON BALLET CIRCLE

The famous American film dancer and choreographer, GENE KELLY, will speak at the Coronation meeting of the Circle on Sunday, June 21, 1953, at 3 p.m. There will be many distinguished visitors in London for this important month, and the Circle welcomes all visitors. The meeting will be at the new address of Wilcox Studios, Bryanston Street, W.1 (rear of Cumberland Hotel, Marble Arch). Members 1/-, non-members 2/6. For full details of the Circle's activities, apply to the Secretary, Mr. S. Hawkins, 132 Kensington Park Road, W.11. For those interested, there are ballet classes for beginners.

SUMMER BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

THE AMERICAN NATIONAL BALLET THEATRE under the direction of LUCIA CHASE and OLIVER SMITH will open a four-week season at the Royal Opera House on Monday, July 13. The season will end on Saturday, August 8. They will be followed by the ROYAL DANISH BALLET, who will give a two-week season from August 10—22. This will be the first visit this company has ever paid to Great Britain.

ENGAGEMENT

We offer our congratulations to WENDY WINN and BRIAN ASHBRIDGE, both of Sadlers Wells Ballet, who announced their engagement recently.

MARGÓT FONTEYN

(Contd)

with her friends. She is well read and well informed. And she loves to relax with a group of people who have known her long and to "giggle a lot." But to discuss dancing in the abstract—or dissect a role in detail, is anathema to her.

"Of course, sometimes one does talk about a ballet, or a particular step. Bobby may come back from America with a suggestion, for instance. Or Fred Ashton may tell me how he once saw the Diaghileff ballet company do a certain difficult piece. But ballet is a job. Shop talk is always boring if it goes on too long. And besides, I don't 'build up' a role consciously. I don't believe artists really 'build up' their pictures either. I just concentrate and do it each time as well as I possibly can. And as for talking about it, specially on the day, I'm much too frightened. I don't even like to think



Erio Piccagliani, Milan
Tanaquil Leclercq in Balanchine's production at La Scala, Milan
of "Baiser de la Fée."

Ballet in June

Ballet Workshop

ovent Garden

- June 2 Lac (Act II) (Fonteyn, Helpmann); Homage to the Queen (1st perf.); Facade (Fonteyn, Elvin, Grey, Nerina, Dale, Somes, Field, Grant, Hart, Rassine).
- June 3 Lac (Act II) (Beriosova); Homage to the Queen, Facade
- June 9 The Shadow; Lac (Act II) (Markova); Homage to the Queen
- June 12 Lac des Cygnes (Jackson).
- June 13 Giselle (Markova, Somes); Mat. Veneziana
- June 16 Sylvia (Fonteyn, Somes, Hart).
- June 19 Sylvia (Grey, Chatfield, Field).
- June 20 Mat. Sylvia (Fonteyn, Somes, Hart).
- June 22 Sylvia (Elvin, Feld, Hart).
- June 24 Shadow; Giselle (Fonteyn, Somes).
- June 25 Veneziana; Giselle (Markova, Somes).
- June 27 Mat. Sylvia (Nerina, Rassine, Hart).
- June 27 Eve. Veneziana; The Shadow; Homage to the Queen.

adlers Wells

- June 5 Pastorale; Blood Wedding (1st perf.); The Great Detective
- June 6 Mat. Carnaval; Blood Wedding; Beauty and the Beast; Les Rendezvous
- June 10 Summer Interlude, Blood Wedding, Beauty and the Beast, Carnaval
- June 13 Mat. Les Rendezvous; La Fete Etrange; Beauty and the Beast; Summer Interlude
- June 16 La Fete Etrange; The Rake's Progress; Beauty and the Beast; Summer Interlude
- June 20 Mat. Carnaval; Blood Wedding; The Great Detective

Ballet Rambert

- Finsbury Park Open Air Theatre —
- June 8, 9, 10 Swan Lake (Act II); Movimentos; Winter Night; Fireflies.
- June 11, 12, 13 Mat. and Eve. Les Sylphides; Fireflies; Carni-
- June 15, 16, 17 Plaisance; Winter Night; Movimentos; Les Sylphides.
- June 18, 19, 20 Mat. and Eve. Swan Lake (Act II); House of Cards; Carnival of Animals; Czernyana.

Theatre Royal Windsor

- June 22, 23 Swan Lake (Act II) (New production); Les Masques (Revival); Winter Night; Facade.
- June 24, 25 Mat. and Eve., 26, 27 Mat. and Eve. Plaisance; Past Recalled; Movimentos; Les Sylphides.
- June 29, 30 Giselle; Gala Performance.
- July 1, 2 Mat. and Eve., 3, 4 Mat. and Eve. Swan Lake (Act II); Mephisto Valse (Revival); Fireflies; Gala Performance.

MARGOT FONTEYN (Contd.)

about it until I get to the theatre!"

When I next watch Margot Fonteyn in one of her big roles—*Princess Aurora, Giselle, Odette*—I shall remember that to her this performance, this one evening is again a completely new challenge. And when the curtain falls and the slender figure comes out to the rising applause, and her arms and the stage around her are filled with flowers, then I will think that perhaps, just for that evening, the hardest critic of all—herself—had thought the dancing "good," and for that evening, *Giselle*, or *Aurora* or *Odette* was her favourite role!

BARBARA WACE.

COMPLICATED—or even not-so-complicated—psychological states coming well within the expressive scope of the Indian dance are beyond that of Western ballet. Thus it was that in *The Golden Pear*, Don Gillies, by employing masks, ropes, poles and a pear of yellow plaster to symbolise what cannot be expressed in terms of pure dancing ended by making the ballet incomprehensible.

Peter Darrell's *Les Chimeres* was set to a most effective score by Michael Hobson. Three hunters encounter some green woodland sprites, tether one with a rope to an anvil-like object set in the middle of the stage, and in the end kill it. Apart from the anxiety we were in lest one of the dancers be impaled upon the projecting end of the anvil, and apart also from wondering why Ballet Workshop so often encumbers the already diminutive stage of the Mercury Theatre with extraneous objects, we enjoyed this ballet. The circular dance-patterns of the tethered sprite were especially interesting.

DOROTHY PRATT.

DANCE THEATRE STUDIO

(Licensed annually by the L.C.C.)

Directors - Hetty Loman, Sally Archbutt

FULL PROFESSIONAL

MODERN DANCE
TRAINING

Studio: TOYNBEE HALL
28 COMMERCIAL ST., LONDON, E.1

Tel.: BISHopsgate 8535

THE SCHOOL OF

BRITISH DANCE THEATRE

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

"BALLET TODAY"

Fill in this form now and send it to the publisher, B. C. Herschel, 15 Penryn Road, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey, with a cheque or postal order for 14/- to cover one year's subscription.

NAME

ADDRESS

FILL
THIS
IN
NOW!

ACADEMY CINEMA

165 Oxford Street, W.1

Ger 2981

GRAND PRIX CANNES, 1952

CASTELLANI'S

tempestuous comedy

TWO PENNYWORTH OF HOPE (A)

"Stands out as a delightful heart-warming film." *THE TIMES*

and

THE IMPOSTOR (A)

A Japanese tale of intrigue and adventure.

PHYLLIS BEDELLS

VICE-PRESIDENT ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCING

SCHOOL OF BALLET - Professional and Amateur

BALLET (R.A.D.), CHARACTER, MIME, GREEK, BALLROOM, TAP
INCLUSIVE TRAINING FOR STUDENTS

28 QUEX ROAD, WEST HAMPSTEAD, N.W.6 Maida Vale 2324

SIGURD LEEDER SCHOOL OF DANCE LONDON

FULL PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

INTENSIVE EVENING COURSE

AMATEUR CLASSES FOR MEN & WOMEN

OPEN CLASSES FOR PROFESSIONALS - Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays, 3 p.m.

46a REGENT SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1. Tel.: TERminus 1915

Ballet Today

Published monthly at 1/-, by B. G. Herschel

ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Whole page £20 and pro rata

Special positions 25% extra

Series discounts:

2½% for 3,

5% for 6,

10% for 12

All enquiries to Sole Advertisement Representatives

J. STONEBANKS

33 CRAWFORD PLACE, W.1

Telephone: PAD 2038

BALLET

*in Britain Since
the War*

BY CLIVE BARNES

A book by a young enthusiast for those who love ballet. What is the future of ballet? Is its popularity fading? Will it become so "modern" as to appeal only to a few? Mr. Clive Barnes' little book overflows with information, including descriptions of every ballet company and every important ballet and dancer that have appeared in Britain since the War.

A THRIFT BOOK

1/6 net

Send for a complete list of titles

C. A. WATTS & CO. LTD.

Johnson's Court · Fleet Street · London · E.C.4

STELLA MANN

SCHOOL OF DANCING

MODERN BALLET	CLASSICAL BALLET
Stella Mann technique	R.A.D.
Improvisation	Olive Geddes
Composition etc.	A.R.A.D.

PROFESSIONALS. AMATEURS. CHILDREN

DAY AND EVENING CLASSES

8 Netherhall Gardens NW3 - Phone HAM 9317

HILDE HOLGER

Formerly of VIENNA-BOMBAY teaches:

Technique & Expression
of the Modern School
at her

School of Modern Ballet

27, Oval Road, Regents Pk.,
London N.W.1 Tel. GUL 6822

★
Professionals
★
Amateurs
★
Children
★

Forthcoming Publication

A BOOK OF BALLET STORIES

by Pigeon Crowle

With many photographs of characters and scenes from the ballet and drawings by Francis Gower.

Stories and action of the ballet with historical associations of each ballet.

Ready in Autumn 12/6

Faber & Faber, 24, Russell Square, W.C.1

L. & R. ADAIR

theatrical costumiers

COSTUMES ALL PERIODS IN STOCK
— HIRE OR SALE —

tights

COTTON and WOOL MIXED	- pair	16/-
COTTON FISH NET (black)	- -	30/-
WOOL	- -	30/-
LEOTARDS (Cotton & Wool mixed)	-	15/-
WOOL (made to order or from stock)	-	30/-
TUTUS (Satin spangled bodice)	-	£5
Long Ballet ditto	- - -	£6

by return POST cash with order, C.O.D., or callers
Postage 6d. extra

33 OLD COMPTON STREET
LONDON, W.1

(opp. Gamba's)

GERrard 7043

There's something about a Sailor ...

... and a dancing display in aid of King George's Fund for Sailors, wherever it is held, is sure of a warm and widespread response. Why not arrange one in your district during Coronation Year? K.G.F.S. Area Organisers have valuable contacts in all parts of the country, and yours will give you the fullest support with press and general publicity, posters, programmes, etc. It can be a great occasion for you and your pupils; and with the proceeds you devote to the Fund you are helping sailors and dependants of all sea-services.

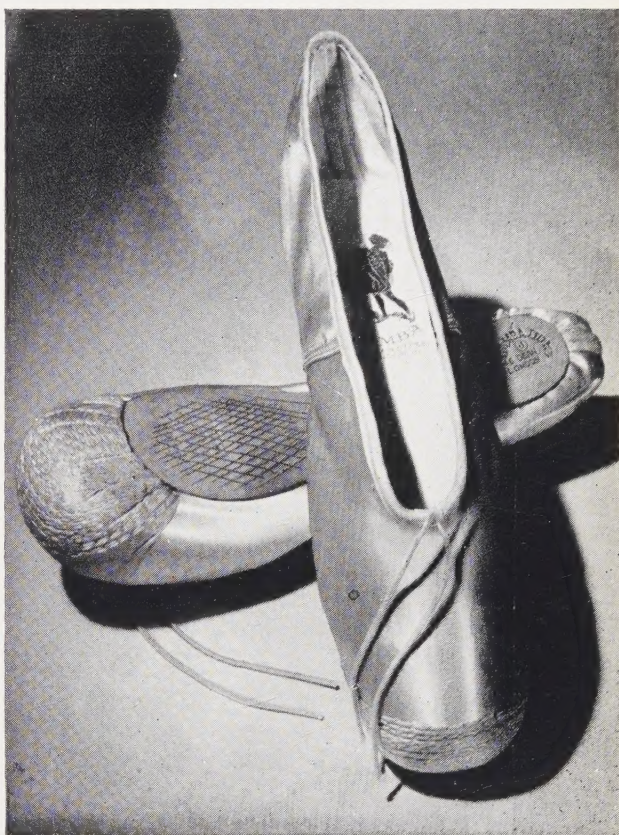
Full particulars can be obtained from the Appeals Secretary—

King George's Fund for Sailors

1 Chesham Street, London, S.W.1



THE PERFECT BALLET SHOE!



Added to all the best that can be found in a ballet shoe, is the embroidered toe featured above.

This saves the ballerina hours of darning. It is a patent and is therefore

EXCLUSIVE TO



46 DEAN ST., SHAFTESBURY AVE.
LONDON, W.1

AGENTS EVERYWHERE

BALLET TODAY



PHOTO GALLERY No. 14-JUNE, 1953

Irma Villamil, who dances as guest artist of the Lambrinos Ballet in South America.